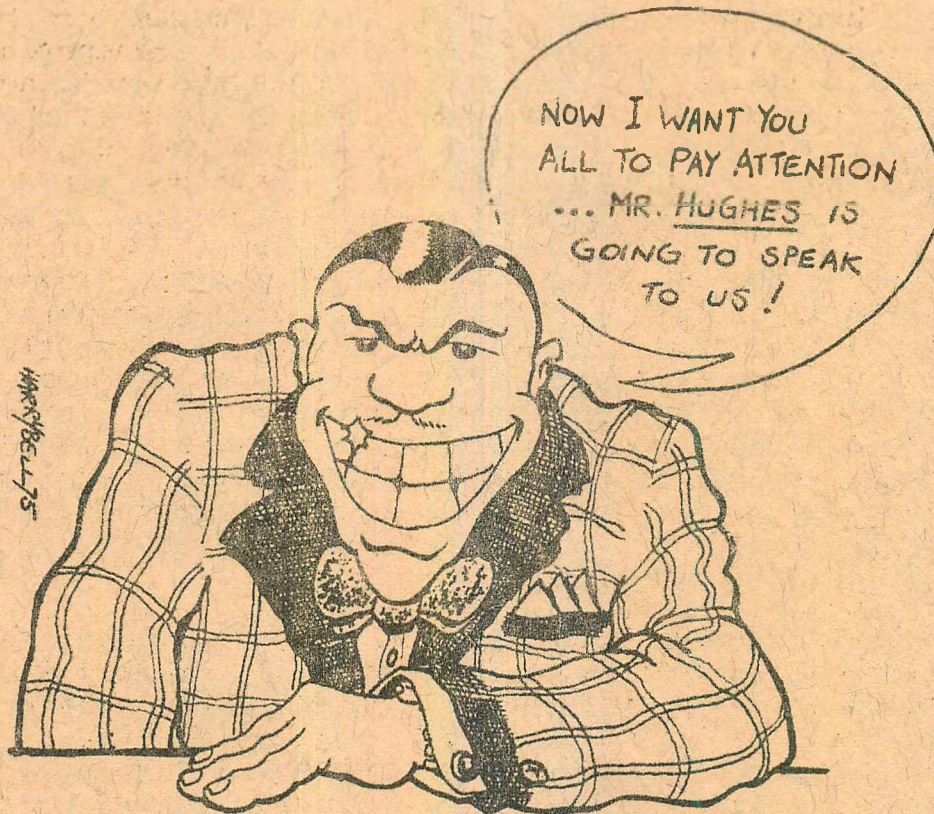


MOTA



Steve Stites & Dan Steffan



TOLL TALE

Remember how it was when you first discovered science fiction? Do you recall the way each new concept captured your imagination, opening new fields of thought for you, and the high powered rush you'd get from your Sense of Wonder? I'm working on a book which I hope will rekindle that feeling for many of you. My novel will span the time between then and now, as well as the distance between Terra and Luna. The main focus of this science fiction work will be on the construction of a bridge between the earth and the moon. As yet, I haven't actually written any of it -- we all know there's nothing to writing a book except being a typist -- but I have it all plotted out mentally in great detail. You must admit it's a challenging concept, one worthy of the imagination of yesteryear. Don't worry about suspending your disbelief, I've taken care of that: it will be a suspension bridge. The novel is to be an epic account of Stanley Moshe Liebowitz, a young man with a big dream, and how that dream in turned into reality when he builds a bridge between earth and the moon, spanning the vast sea of space. Perhaps the people who brought SPACE: 1999 to our tv screens will make a television show from my novel. All that remains to be done is the writing. My working title is: A Cantilever for Liebowitz.

"When in doubt, speak French." --- Loren MacGregor

GOTCHA COVERED

A number of comments have come in with regard to last issue's cover by Dan Steffan. Harry Warner, Jr., likened it with its word balloons to the closing scene of The Waltons. Paul Di Filippo compared it to work in the National Lampoon. Jay Kinney mentioned the influence of Will Eisner on Dan Steffan's brushstrokes. However, most of the comments have come from Jim Meadows III and other puzzled fans who wrote that gee it sure is nice...but just what is it anyhow? What does it all mean?

The rest of the issue was already on stencil by the time I got the cover and I neglected to include a line explaining the true Inner Meaning of the drawing. I hope this admission of an error on my part doesn't shock too many of you. Even merfect pasters such as myself will on occasion make a mistake. Sometimes as many as three in a lifetime. That cover on MOTA #14 was a view of the subterranean editorial offices of this fanzine as seen through the glasses of Dan Steffan. (In addition to being widely known as America's foremost air hockey hustler, Dan is a Class AA peeping tom.) I hope this explanation has not taken any of the sweet mystery of life away from any of you.

While last issue's cover was a rendering of my apartment, this issue's most definitely is not. This convention scene was pencilled by Steve Stiles and inked by Dan Steffan. Steve knows it really is a proud and lonely thing to be the only one on an elevator who doesn't have pointed ears. Since turnabout is fair play, MOTA #16 will feature a cover pencilled by Dan Steffan and inked by Steve Stiles which depicts a different aspect of a science fiction convention.

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Don't look now, but I think MOTA is turning into a monthly fanzine. I know it sounds incredible, however, last issue was dated February, this issue is being sent out in March, and next issue will come out in April (of 1976, wiseguy). Why #17 may even come out in May! Really, I'm as surprised as you are. This strange set of event just may continue until I find a nice, cool, inviting glass of Nydall's Nectar.

To help prolong this madness please send me hilarious articles and artwork. In return all I can offer you is fame, fortune, good health, wish fulfillment, and freedom from foot odor.

The deadline for voicing your choice in this year's Down Under Fan Fund contest is quickly approaching. I urge you to send your ballot --and your money--in right away. All the fans on the ballot are fine individuals, but I am supporting John Alderson as the one I'd most like to meet. Even if you don't have preference, you can still send money to help one of the good causes in fandom. I'm certain the administrators will gladly accept monetary donations even after the voting deadline has past. It costs a lot of money to cross the Pacific Ocean, so please give DUFF your support.

[This article is revised and much enlarged from a section (pages 15-16) of Bob's Aussiecon Report in Le Zombie. Those of you who feel you should have gotten that issue but failed to receive it in the mail should contact Bob Tucker, 34 Greenbriar Dr., Jacksonville, IL 62650.]

THE BALLARAT

EXPRESS

BY
BOB TUCKER

Do you pride yourself on a vivid imagination? Can you see in your mind's eye brawny heroes astride their giant thoats fighting their way across the storm-swept Martian deserts? Can you easily see Gilbert Gosseyn swinging from the rain-drenched trees on Venus? Do you claim to possess a sense of wonder second to none, and can read innumerable novels of Brak the Barbarian and Perry Rhodan without suffering upset stomach? Very well then, try this scene: picture the Ballarat Express speeding off into the cold, snowy dawn of an Australian winter, bound for the distant goldfields; picture an excursion train filled with hundreds of Canadian, American, and Australian fans bent on holiday to seek fame and fortune---mostly fortune. Picture the startled railroad employees strung out along the right-of-way, or standing in open station doorways as the train zooms by, looking in wonder at the Aussiecon excursion express.

Picture an astonished engineer in the diesel up ahead, as impatient fans jog along the track and pass him, taunt him.

The Ballarat Express made fannish (and railroad) history.

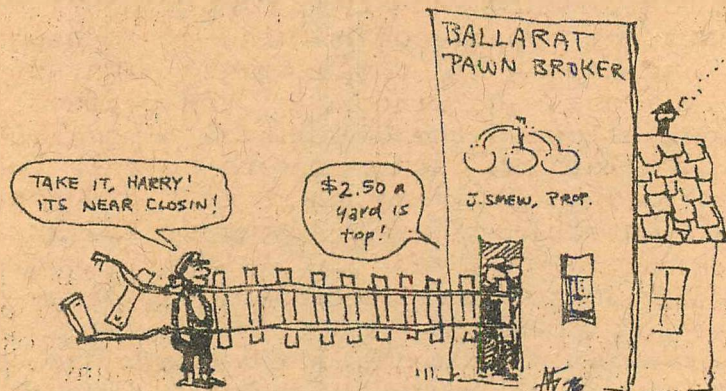
I'm in love with trains, all manner of trains. I've been a gung-ho train fan ever since that summer day in 1930 when I ran away from an orphanage and hopped a passing freight, a train that took me far away from the town and the institution where I'd spent many miserable years. I've been an enthusiastic train fan since that first one, riding boxcars, coaches, and pullmans, riding behind steam, electric and diesel loco-

motives, and I thought that I had seen everything. I was wrong. My eyes were opened wide in Australia last August when I realized how little I'd seen, when I realized new delights were awaiting. I fell in love with Australia and Australian trains, and I was absolutely entranced with the Ballarat Express---but I was probably the only fan aboard who looked upon that train as a treasure. My fellow passengers were less than enthusiastic.

I put that down to their inexperience, their youthfulness. They just weren't used to riding trains a century or so old. Without heat. And at a pace so slow a fan could, if he wished, jump off the train and race the engineer into the next town.

Robin Johnson and the convention committee had made all the arrangements for the excursion train, and had sold tickets during the convention; it was to be a final togetherness-party for the fans the day after the convention closed, something that had not been done before in worldcon affairs. I suppose I'm the only one who considers it a success. Ballarat is a small town perhaps fifty or sixty miles west of Melbourne, situated at a higher and considerably colder elevation; it is the site where gold was discovered in 1851, setting off a mad rush comparable to the California and Klondike rushes of American history. The Australian government has fenced in the site and sells admission tickets to all comers. Tourists may, if they wish, inspect the restorations of the original town strung up the slope of Sovereign Hill, they may actually pan for gold in Red Gully Creek, and if they are especially foolhardy they may fall over the cliff at the top of the Hill. (Of course, the timid and the freezing may stay inside the tourist souvenir shop at the entrance gate.) Bus and train tours to the goldfields are common in the warmer months but this winter-time adventure was something of an experiment, I suspect.

And so, the day after Aussiecon closed, a mob of happy, carefree fans descended on the Spencer Street station and looked about for their excursion train. It wasn't there. Rumors flew thick, as rumors do when fans are about, and soon we were told that (1) nobody could find the engineer, (2) the trainmaster had lost the train, and/or (3) track-gangs had taken up the Ballarat trackage and sold it for beer. We set-



tled down on the benches to wait, making merry as fans do when beset by mundane obstacles. Susan Wood bought bunches of yellow daffodils at a station flowershop and distributed them to all and sundry, fans and trainmen alike. On her second trip back to the shop to buy yet more daffodils, the shopkeeper wondered aloud what she was doing with them and she explained that she ate them for breakfast. The shopkeeper was loathe to believe that statement, until Robin Johnson demonstrated how it was done---a snack as tasty as eggs, bacon, or oatmeal. The shopkeeper was suitably impressed. Meanwhile we bedevilled the poor commuters, took fannish photographs in front of native advertising displays, cleaned out the coffee and hot chocolate supplies, and inspected the famous murals in the station proper as well as some others in the men's toilet. During that long wait there were a few mutterings of insurrection, and a few threats to return to the hotel and go back to bed, but the more stout-hearted fans prevailed and so we waited, pinned down to the cold benches.

ACTUALLY, SUSAN, WITH
A LITTLE SALT IT WOULD
BE QUITE TASTY!



An hour or two later our train arrived, and all hands rushed joyously out to the platform to discover the Ballarat Express. I said "Goody!" with surprise and delight, but my fellow travellers expressed other sentiments.

The only concession to the twentieth century was a small diesel locomotive pulling the train. The remainder of the train consisted of three lovely, antique wooden coaches (the same coaches that probably hauled the goldminers during their 1851 rush) and an equally aged wooden brakevan bringing up the rear. European-style compartments ran crossways of the cars, each compartment capable of holding up to eight people on bench-type seats. (And in several compartments eight people did cram together for warmth.) Doors and windows of the coaches fitted badly because of warped age, allowing the delightful winter breezes to ventilate the interiors. Toilets in each car were so cold that no one dared stay long, lest they lose by freezing their most precious possessions. These cars, like many Australian hotels, houses, and apartments had no central heating. In their own homes, the Australians plugged in electric or gas room heaters, or went without altogether. Hardy people.

The brakevan at the rear was a combination baggage car and caboose. The front section was a baggage car, where some of the younger fans danced to stay warm, while the rear-most section was a caboose with steps and small seats where one could climb up and peer through grimy windows at



the train ahead. The brakeman was a surly fellow who never uttered a word during the whole trip. He was content to ride at an open window, peering out and ahead, keeping a suspicious eye on the engineer up front in that warm diesel.

Apparently no one took tickets on the train. The conductor (carrying his own daffodil with pride and elan) went through the train two or three times counting heads, but arrived at a different total each time. None of us had the courage to tell him that some fans were hiding in toilets, and that others more daring than the rest were riding topside on the car roofs, and that a few were outside running ahead of the train. We didn't think he would take kindly to fans outdistancing his train, or taunting the engineer. On one of his trips through the cars, the conductor passed out copies of his fanzine---a mimeographed time-table published by the Victorian Railways which was supposed to be the schedule for our excursion train.

(Read Down)

Spencer St.	9:33 AM
Footscray	9:43
Werribee	10:10
North Gelong "A" Box	10:40
North Gelong	10:43D
Gheringhap	11:00 Pre 17
Lal Lal	11:52D
Ballarat	12:24

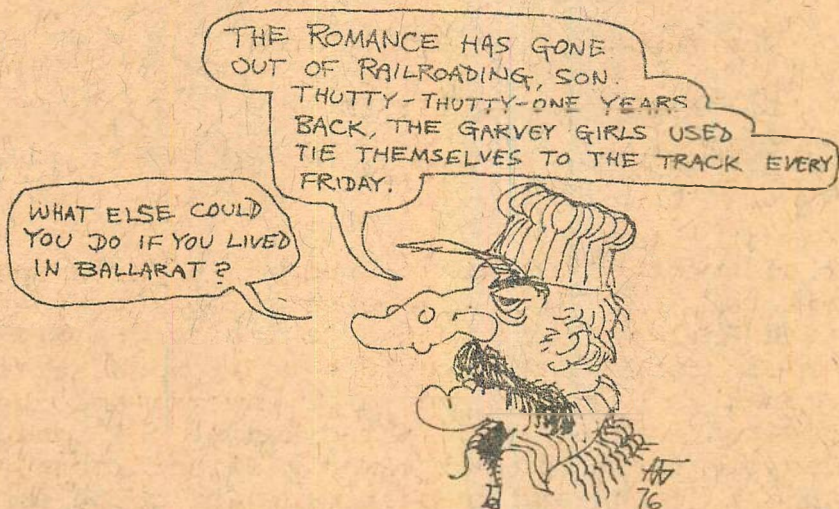
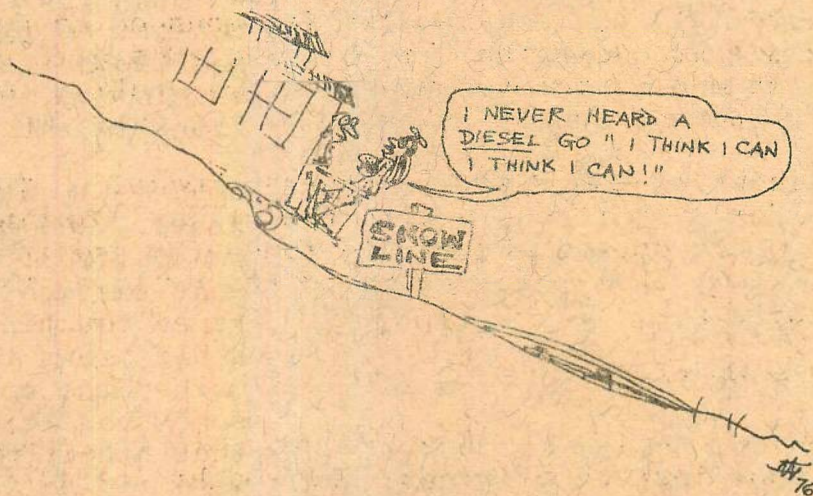
There were a total of twenty-four stations beginning with Spencer Street and ending with Ballarat, but I don't remember stopping at any of them; I think the Victorian Railways just wanted to impress us with their fanzine and the number of stations they could have stopped at, if they were in the mood to be ornery. On we zipped, ever onward, and the fifty or sixty miles were covered in less than three hours. (I consulted a map later and discovered the train had not taken a direct route, but instead had gone south around a "loop" and then turned back north to Ballarat.

I think the officials were proud of their train and their country, and wanted the visiting Americans to have time to fully inspect both.)

Two buses met us upon our arrival, and the conductor hopped off his train and onto one of the buses to act as tour guide. I thought that a novel gesture, and resolved to tell Amtrak about it when I returned home.

Meanwhile we were all freezing. Cheerfully, of course.

We gave the government our pittances and trooped through the gate to climb Sovereign Hill, where icy winds and intermittent rain made our stay a happy one. (You probably wouldn't believe me if I said the top of the Hill had an elevation of about five thousand feet. No, I didn't think you'd believe that.) We inspected the old reconstructed town with its reconstructed opera house, hotel, print shop, ironmongery, pottery shop, stables, Chinese joss house, free library (but no science fiction on the shelves), bakery, tinshop and all that, and the hovels where miners and their wives lived and froze a century ago while panning for fortunes. (Some of us, some of the more timid, remained inside the souvenir shop and bookstall, but I don't believe that building was there a century ago.) Late in the afternoon I saw snowflakes falling. I called out to Sheryl Birkhead and Mike Glicksohn and Don Thompson to bear witness to my discovery: snow, by Hugo, atop Sovereign Hill! In some fanzine the past summer, Lesleigh Luttrell had said that it didn't snow in jolly old Australia, but I now had witnesses to prove that it did. The discovery warmed us all and we



went on to visit the rest of the park. Some fans panned for gold in Red Gully Creek; others clustered around Sheryl as she explained farm fowl and animals to ignorant city slickers ("What is a Rhode Island Red, Aunty Sheryl?"); one Los Angeles fan managed to not fall down a mine shaft; and I stood on the very brink of the Hill gazing down at the town of Ballarat and my beloved wooden train waiting for us on a sidetrack. It is a proud and lonely thing to be the only fan to love a train.

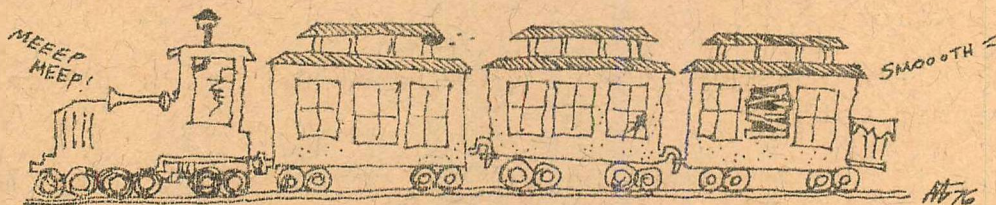
The remainder of the visit was anti-climactic. The buses hauled us around Ballarat for a short while with the guides pointing out shopping centers and rich men's houses and marble fountains and fancy statues and all that sort of thing, then returned us to the Ballarat Express. The lovely wooden express.

It was now heated!

Surprised and delighted fans crowded into the compartments, now only six to each room instead of eight, and fought for foot space on the heaters. Each compartment had been given a foot-warmer, a metal container about the size and shape of a bed pillow, filled with boiling water. And off we roared into the Australian night, bound for Melbourne and the final stay in the convention hotel.

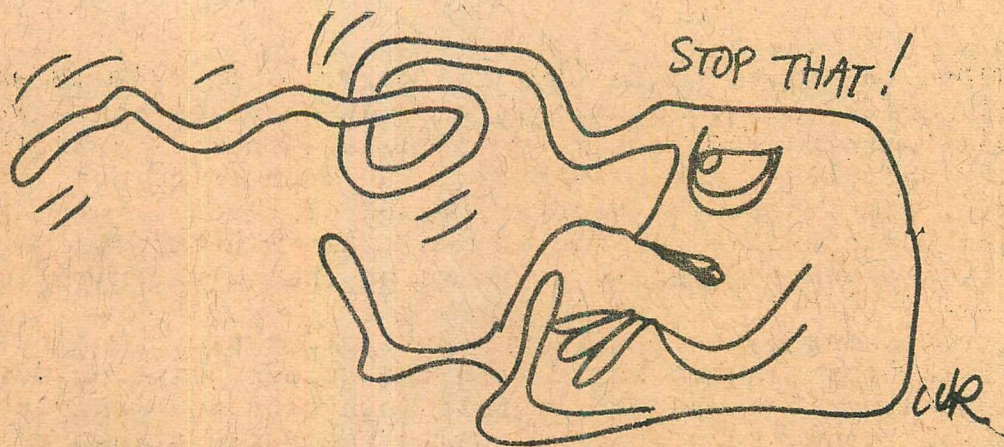
There were murmurings of bliss and contentment as each of us jostled for foot space, sprightly oaths and good-natured jabs into each other's ribs, blackened eyes and bloodied noses as the happy fans competed for heat and a few square inches of those hot little pillows. Truly, a fitting way to end a convention. We sped back to the distant city on the Ballarat Express, a train I now treasure in my memory.

+ Bob Tucker +



SON OF B*A*R*F

DAVE PIPER



I was legging it up the road the other lunch-hour, well, trudging would be a better description...it was pissing down...and I started wistfully thinking of how, just a brief month or so ago, it was very, very hot and sunny over here. Thinking of the hot weather I suddenly thought of another hot summer we had a few years ago and something which happened which, upon reflection, struck me that Terry and illustrious readership (YOU) might find of interest. I put this into me OMPAzone at the time so I guess a sub-title Up There could be 'Dave Piper's Very Own Entropy Reprint'...yes?

It was when we lived round the corner at Dawlish Drive...

Very hot night...

I followed Cath up to bed. She went into the bathroom and after a couple minutes called me in. "Listen," she said, "can you hear anything?" I stood against the partition wall dividing the bathroom from Clare's room. On the wall was a bathroom cabinet with drugs and potions and all like that in it. I heard:

ticktickticktickticktick

"What is it?" said Cath, alarmed.

"I dunno."

ticktickticktickticktick

"It's a bomb! It's a bomb! I'm taking Clare downstairs and calling the police!" screamed Cath.

"Now...NOW!" said I, "let's not be hasty already. I'll take Clare downstairs and call the police -- you stay up here and keep your eyes peeled."

ticktickticktickticktick

Cath rushed into Clare's room, grabbed the little mite (who didn't know what was happening), clutched her to her bosom and stood outside the bathroom all a-tremble. And to see Cath all a-tremble is a truly awesome sight. The noise appeared to be coming from within the wall and was at its loudest when I put me ear to the wall. It resembled a clock but there wasn't a clock anywhere around. By this time it was about 11:30 pm, and I, with a sigh, stumbled out into the garden, down to the shed, and got me steps out with much banging, swearing and clattering. Several lights went on either side of our house; they must have thought the Russians were

coming. Or here. I dragged the steps up the stairs and got up into the loft -- it didn't sound like water dripping but that was my first thought -- I have this fear of dripping water (but that's another story). Nothing happening up in the loft.

ticktickticktickticktick

"Gerald's light's still on, Dave, why don't you ask his advice?" said Cath.

"Well, ok," says I, and went over and knocked him up. He wasn't too pleased....I mean it was only 11:45 by this time and if you can't ask the bloke next door for advice, then what hope is there for the world? I mean just 'cause he was in his dressing gown and all and just about to leap back into bed and all and just because it was a leettle late....does that give him the excuse to try and trip me up whilst going up the stairs? Well, does it? Anyway, I asked him up to listen, and he musta been deaf as the proverbial post 'cause he couldn't hear a bloody thing. So he went back to bed, muttering, and I got up into the loft again. Still couldn't see anything amiss. Came down again.

ticktickticktickticktick

Cath started to empty the bathroom cabinet, which you will remember was on the wall. Suddenly...*!*

Yeah, SILENCE.

"There. I said all along it was two bottles knocking together," said Cath, smugly, with a complete disregard for the facts as detailed above.

"Rubbish," says I, "perpetual motion is out. Tell you what, you start putting the stuff back into the cabinet and I'll listen." So with me ear pressed up against the wall I listened as Cath, gingerly, replaced the bottles and potions, etc. Suddenly...

ticktickticktickticktick

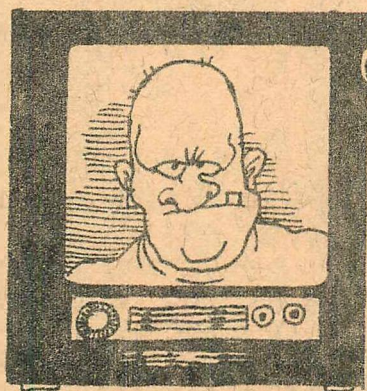
"That's it, that's it!" screamed Cath, all a-tremble again.

And it was. An aerosol hair lacquer. Ticking. I started to take the top off but Cath screamed that it'd explode and ordered me to throw it out into the garden. I went downstairs but as I didn't have anything on me feet, I then ordered Cath to take it down to the bottom of the garden. She held the thing at arm's length, took it down to the bottom and then ran up the path to me waiting arms.

It didn't, in fact, explode at any time and next day when Cath went down there it had stopped ticking. How or why, I dunno, nor how or why it started but I, strongly, suggest that if any of you have an aerosol hair lacquer and the temperature starts going up...chuck it out!

This has been a Public Service Announcement.

+ Dave Piper +



art bye DAMMY
STEFFAN

i WAS A TEENAGE SPORTS FAN BYE ERIC MAYER

"Why do you enjoy seeing 300 pound creeps stomp on each other's heads?" Kathy asked me one evening as we watched All Star Wrestling on TV.

"Well...I wouldn't phrase the question quite that way," I muttered, too engrossed in the action to come up with the kind of snappy response readers have come to expect from fan writers who can sit in front of their typewriters for as many hours, or days, as it takes them to think up snappy responses.

Waldo Von Eric, a special favorite of mine, had climbed up onto the top ring rope. Now he launched himself into the air and came swooping down toward his supine adversary like a crewcut V-2.

"What a fake," observed Kathy, as the German's enormous stormtrooper's boot landed, with devastating impact, squarely against his opponet's throat, without, however, seperating head from body.

"You have to use your imagination. Think of it as a live comic book."

"A comic book for who? Illiterates?"

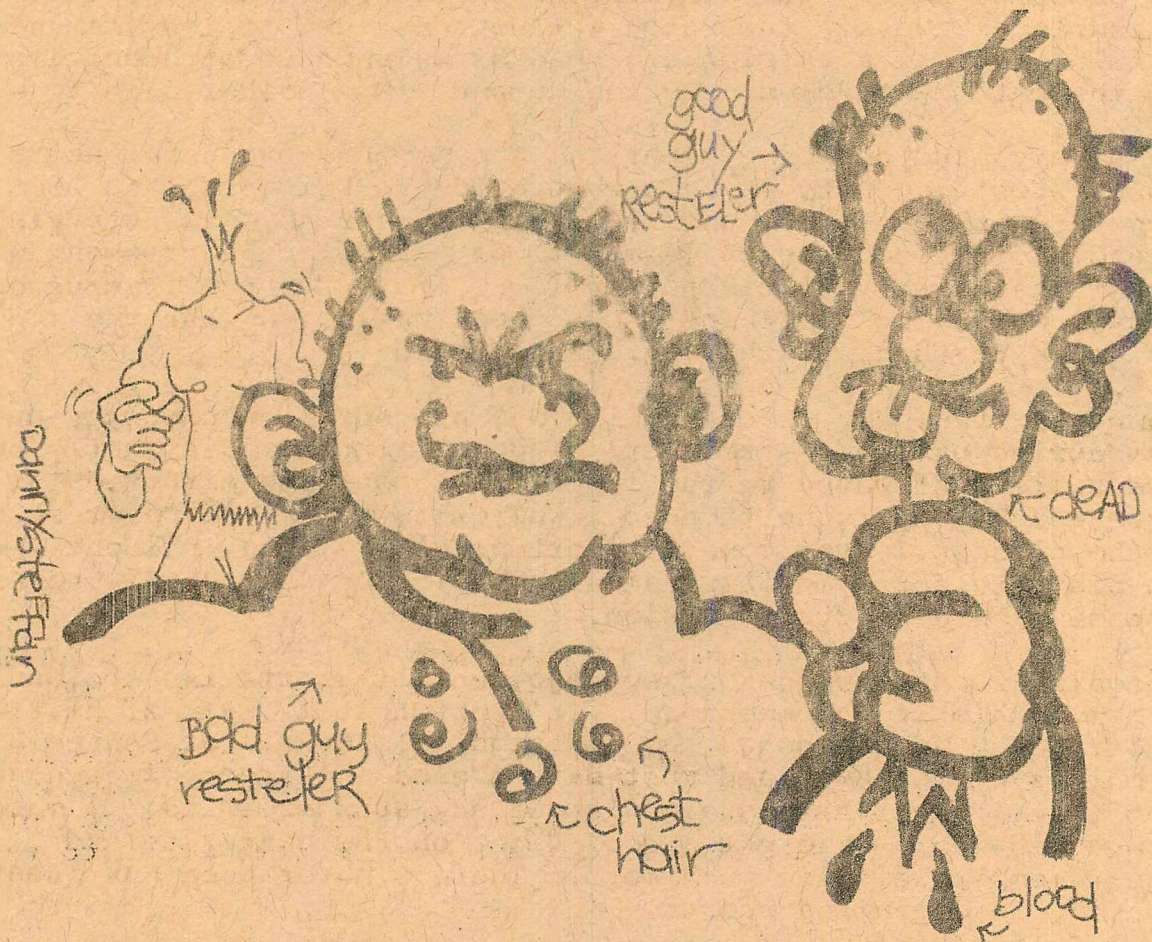
"OK then, consider it a sports soap opera," I said, getting mad enough to go for the weak point in her intellectual defense. "Can an old fashioned German boy find success in New York City? And what of the rift between--"

"All right. So what? I can't understand what you see in sports at all. They make me ill. All those overweight jerks running around, sweating and trying to knock one another over."

"Rudolph Nureyev sweats."

"Not from trying to knock people over."

I got up to make a cup of tea which is always a good thing to do when you find yourself stuck for something to say, whether in an argument or a fanzine article. I hate watching sports with Kathy. She won't let me forget what a waste of time it is.



The science fiction fan, caught with some hack space opera about rampaging BEMs, can surround himself with a veritable force field of impressive terms. Social Significance, future shock, time binding, broad mental horizons -- all have been linked to science fiction at one time or another by enterprising fans of the genre. A science fiction story may be badly written, cliched, intellectually bankrupt and morally repugnant, but the fact that it takes place 4000 years in the future or 4000 light years away lends it a specious cosmic significance.

The sports fan is not so fortunate. Clearly, the fact that Babe Ruth hit 714 baseballs over arbitrarily placed fences, has no particular effect on the universe as a whole.

I've given up trying to justify my obsession with sports. But I'm still trying to explain it...with very limited success.

Consider my introduction to wrestling. I was in junior high school. The participants were not 300 pound sides of beef decked out in velvet robes and sequins but goose pimply 90 pounders less than amply covered with baggy Dal-Hi gym uniforms. I was one of the participants, unfortunately.

I remember feeling a distinct physical aversion to the whole affair. I had no desire at all to get down to the undignified business of rolling about on the cold mat in an attempt to immobilize my opponent. My opponent, who had about as little flesh on his bones as I did, apparently suffered from the same lack of competitive fervor. We locked our clammy hand in the prescribed way and started pushing and pulling reluc-

tantly in order to use up our six minutes in the least objectionable manner permissible. However, the match was not destined to last six minutes. As we shuffled from side to side the sole of my sneaker attached itself firmly to the mat. I pivoted. My leg turned. My sneaker didn't.

There was a very loud snapping sound, of a type that one never hears in professional wrestling matches even when Waldo Vo Eric puts his boot across someone's throat. I found myself sitting on the mat, studying the peculiar angle of my foot which seemed to be having a disagreement with my knee over the actual position of my lower leg. The gym instructor was hovering over me saying something about wheelchairs and what the school board was going to think if this got in the paper.

An ambulance arrived. My fractured leg was placed in a temporary cast and I was carried out on a stretcher. I don't remember distinctly but I may have smiled and waved to the large crowd that had gathered for this unique event. Everyone thought I was quite brave. I never screamed. That was the closest I ever came to sporting glory. The incident left me with a distaste for gym class and a numb big toe. It hardly seems like the basis for a sports obsession.

But then again, I often wonder if my enjoyment of sports isn't closely related to my athletic incompetence. It's not that I dream of hitting homeruns off Nolan Ryan (though the old right field wall at Yankee Stadium was only 290 feet away and must have fueled thousands of daydreams) but rather that I never have dreamed about any such exploits. I weigh about as much as Cher -- to put a good light on the matter -- and I can't ever remember weighing much more. There's never been any question of my engaging in organized sports.

I've never known the frustration of failing to make a team. I have little conception of the less than glamorous things that happen off the field -- the practices, the curfews. For me sports remain pure fantasy.

When I read a novel I can't help remembering my own struggles to compose so much as an acceptable fanzine article. There's not a science fiction magazine I can open without recalling a rejection slip. I enjoy reading the newest book by Ursula LeGuin, but my enjoyment is occasionally diluted by envy. I don't feel envy when I watch Joe Namath throw a touchdown pass. It's never occurred to me that I might, under any circumstances, be able to throw a football 60 yards in the air just as three 250 pound linemen converge on me. The idea is ludicrous.

So I watch sporting events through a rose-colored mist of ignorance and whenever I've played at sports it has been solely for the fun of it.

By the time I'd formulated this explanation the water in the teapot had boiled so I made my tea and went back into the living room in time to see George "the Animal" Steele chewing on someone's ear.

"You know," I said to Kathy, "I think I've figured out why I like sports, in spite of their intellectual shortcomings."

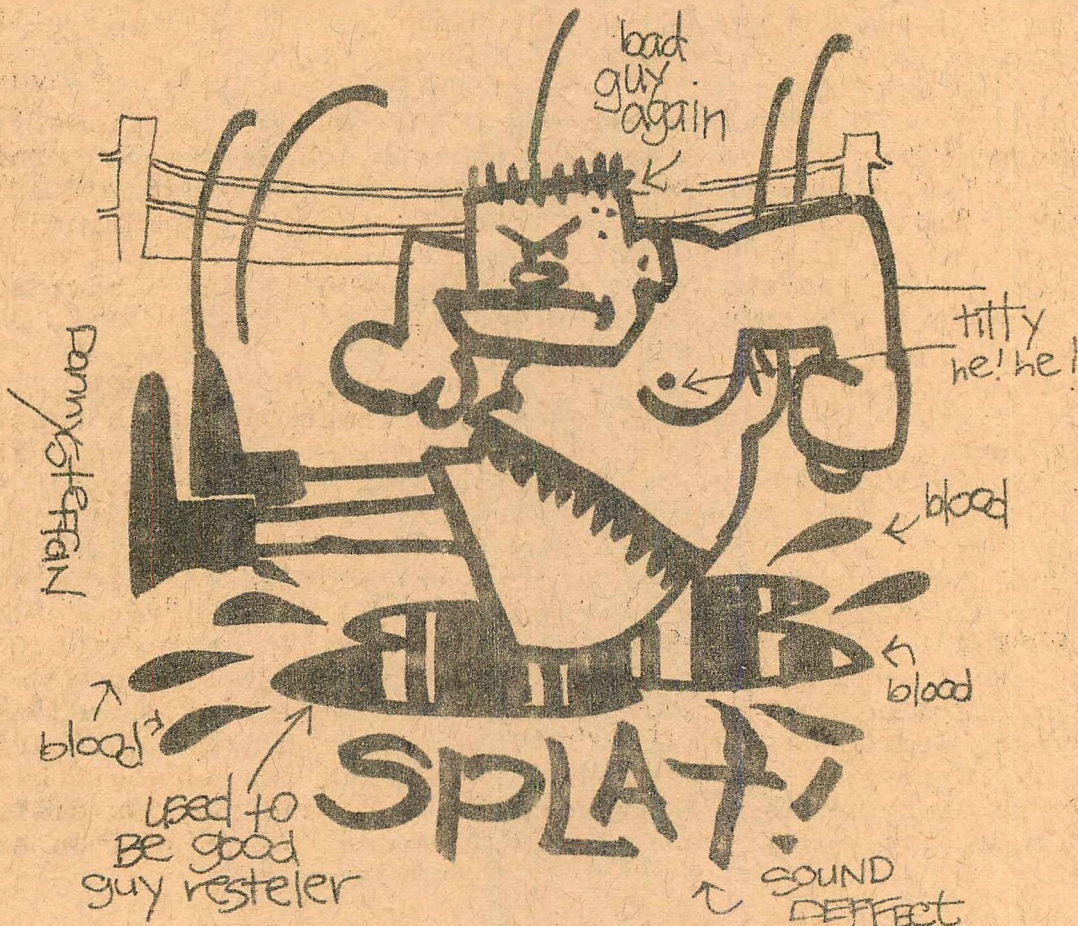
"Fine," she said, managing to conceal her enthusiasm with a look of disgust. "But wrestling isn't even a sport."

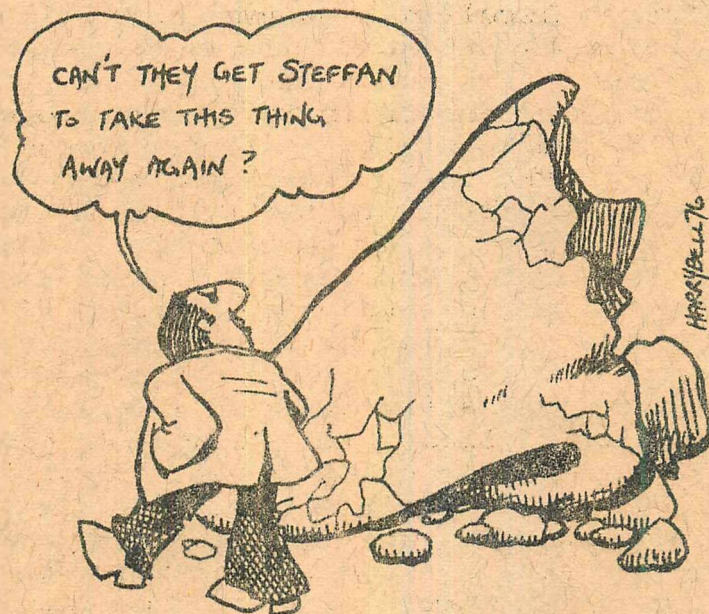
I noticed that the Animal was throttling his opponent. I said, "Look

here. You should at least listen to my explanation. I am the writer. You ought to be happy I've given you all the snappy responses that I have. If this were a convention report and you were Harlan Ellison you can bet I wouldn't have given you anything snappy to say at all."

That shut her up.

+ Eric Mayer +





CHUCK HARRIS
32 Lake Crescent
Daventry
Northants NN11 5EB
United Kingdom

"The Exorcists of IF" is a gem--the finest thing I have seen from James since he stopped drawing covers for SLANT. And, if the Wheels of IF are going to spend eternity playing ghoddminton and talking quietly in the attic, then that's perfectly OK by me, and if you'll stand back a little, it's my service.

I was surprised and pleased that everyone acclaimed it in MOTA 14. Not, I hasten to add, because it didn't deserve acclamation, but because I would have thought time would have dulled fannish memories and that "-" would have been forgotten by now. Bless you Tom Perry and Harry Warner Jnr.

And Tucker too. Twenty years ago, at the very pinnacle of my fannish career, I got the ultimate accolade from Robert Wilson Tucker. "Chuck," he said, "One day I will name a spaceship or something after you." That was it. What more could fandom offer me? I resigned from "-". I gave away my fanzine collection. I sold all my books and prozines except the Vargo Statten Magazine. I defaulted on my FAPA obligations. I even sold my lovely perfect Gestetner along with two unused tubes of ink and a quire of stencils. I wrote to Gollancz and various distributors and arranged for every Tucker book to be sent to me as soon as it was printed.

And I read them. Year after year after year. Horse opera, space opera, thrrrrrrrrrillers. I got the esoteric references. I liked the plots,--well, anyway, the plot,--but the whole object of the exercise was the promised egoboo. I was patient: after all, one could hardly write to God to remind him that he'd promised immortality. Seventeen years I waited and then Gollancz sent me "This Witch" and I found the heroine was named Kehli after Lee Hoffman's bloody horse. Two shelves of books I'd bought and paid for,--I probably financed that Australian trip with my contributions to his royalties,--and I finish second to a dead horse.

Enough is enough and the hell with you Robert Wilson Tucker. The intergalactic cruiser "Chuck Harris" never got into orbit, and if anyone would like a selection of Tucker miscellania cheap.....

HARRY WARNER, JR.
423 Summit Avenue
Hagerstown, MD 21740

Eric Bentcliffe's article brought back lots of memories plus a wistful thought of how nice it would be if Arnie Katz would some day get around to publishing the article by me he has on things in my tape archives. One of the few

sensible things I did in fandom years ago was to save examples of the taped voice of most fans I was in voice contact with. I missed a few, because they were on chains and I had no dubbing facilities, but I've managed to accumulate quite a representative collection of the voices of famous fans of the 1950's, plus a few odds and ends like a tape-fanzine created in Japan, the voice of Laney, and a couple of those wonderful British tape productions that Eric writes about. (I still haven't heard a logical explanation for how they got what sounds like the Mormon Tabernacle Choir chanting fannish words against the background of a full symphony orchestra in one of them.) A couple of other notes: Recorded communication among fans began before wire and tape recorders came into use. I have a few 78 rpm discs containing fannish voices. One or two fans had their own machines for cutting phonograph records. There were also record-your-own-voice booths scattered around the nation where you could talk a message to a friend for a quarter or thereabouts. You can get a good view of one near the beginning of Inside Daisy Clover, because that's where Natalie Wood starts the chain of events which causes her eventually to declare war on civilization. And just recently I learned that the most famous chain tape of the 1950's, the FATE tape, is still in existence, safe and sound. This was the chain for FAPA members. Someone sent me a dubbing of my last contribution to it as a birthday gift, and I was surprised how well I could recall the matters I was chatting about nearly twenty years ago.

ERIC MAYER
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Falls, PA 18615

Paul Di Filippo's explorations into humor are intriguing. But if he's looking for real sleaziness he should look no further than the microcosm he finds himself in. A bad joke is a bad joke, but a bad joke that only a few hundred people in the entire world can understand is a REALLY BAD joke.

This is the path to true sleaziness. Take limericks. As Paul points out, the example he offers is too clever. And not faanish. How about these...

A promising femmefanne named Floe,
Promised 10 BNFs in a row.
She took 'em all on
And collated till dawn.
Her reputation continues to grow.

or

An overweight neo named Rick
Fell in love with a Big A.B. Dick.
He inked up her drum,
And they started to hum.
Now his crudzines are ever so thick.

The beauty of these are that no one can understand them. Show them to your mundane acquaintances.

JAY KINNEY
1786 Fell St.
San Francisco, CA 94117

"Fandom: Brain Drain or Apprenticeship to Genius?" The headline appeared as if by magic across the 7" video screen of my mind. An article that I would never write. Like so many "illos" I would never draw. How many had been aborted by the inward "doctor" of my Will. I would not be thwarted from my appointment with Destiny. How many knew that I had not drawn a fan drawing in years? Yet the slowness of fan editors sustained the illusion that ancient cartoons finally printed were recently done. Why just the other day I had gotten a dittoed fan-kipple from a Lee Carson (or was it Carlson?) containing a 10 year old illo by me therein. Ten years. Not "too long".

True. Occasionally I would read a zine and pen a picture. But the gaps between urges had grown into gaping craters. My "fan rep" was blurred, and so, I thought, it was just as well that I had moved on. Where was 10th fandom now anyway? The Katzes and Kunkles were publishing "Wrestling fanzines"; Aljo Svaboda was working in a cheese gactory in Wisconsin; George Lincoln Rockwell was dead; Mike Glicksohn was fucking oysters. It was all so jumbled. Let it lie, I thought. Let it lie.

(And what about Chris Couch? Why is it no one ever writes about what happened to him. While his energy level was running high, Chris was publishing CIPHER and for a while doing HIGH TIME as well. Then the disaster struck. No one, I guess, really knows why this thing happened; it just did. Chris used to tug at his beard and think fannish thoughts. Then it happened. Today he has no hair on his chin. Yes, Chris Couch has a naked chin -- I saw it with my own eyes. Perhaps tomorrow he will turn into a Republican. Where will the 10th fandom curse end?)

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I want to thank these people for writing letters which, due to space limitations, I could not use this time:

Paul Di Filippo; Mike Glicksohn; Graham Charnock; Jodie Offutt; Sam Long; Bruce Telzer; John Bangsund; Jeff Schalles; Sheryl Birkhead; Bob Tucker; Robert Bloch (who pointed out it was Arthur Lake, not Arthur Lane as I had written); Doug Carroll; Eric Bentcliffe; Dave Piper; and Leroy Kettle (whose fine letter may appear in the next issue).

Oops, just in: Jim Meadows III and Loren MacGregor.

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COA:

John Bangsund, P.O. Box 434, NORwood, SA 5067, Australia

And this address for those who have asked:

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MOTA #15, March 1976 issue.
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MOTA is available for contributions
and comments. Sample copies are
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different manner. Please let me
know if you copy arrives in
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The opinions expressed within this
fanzine are entirely ridiculous.

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